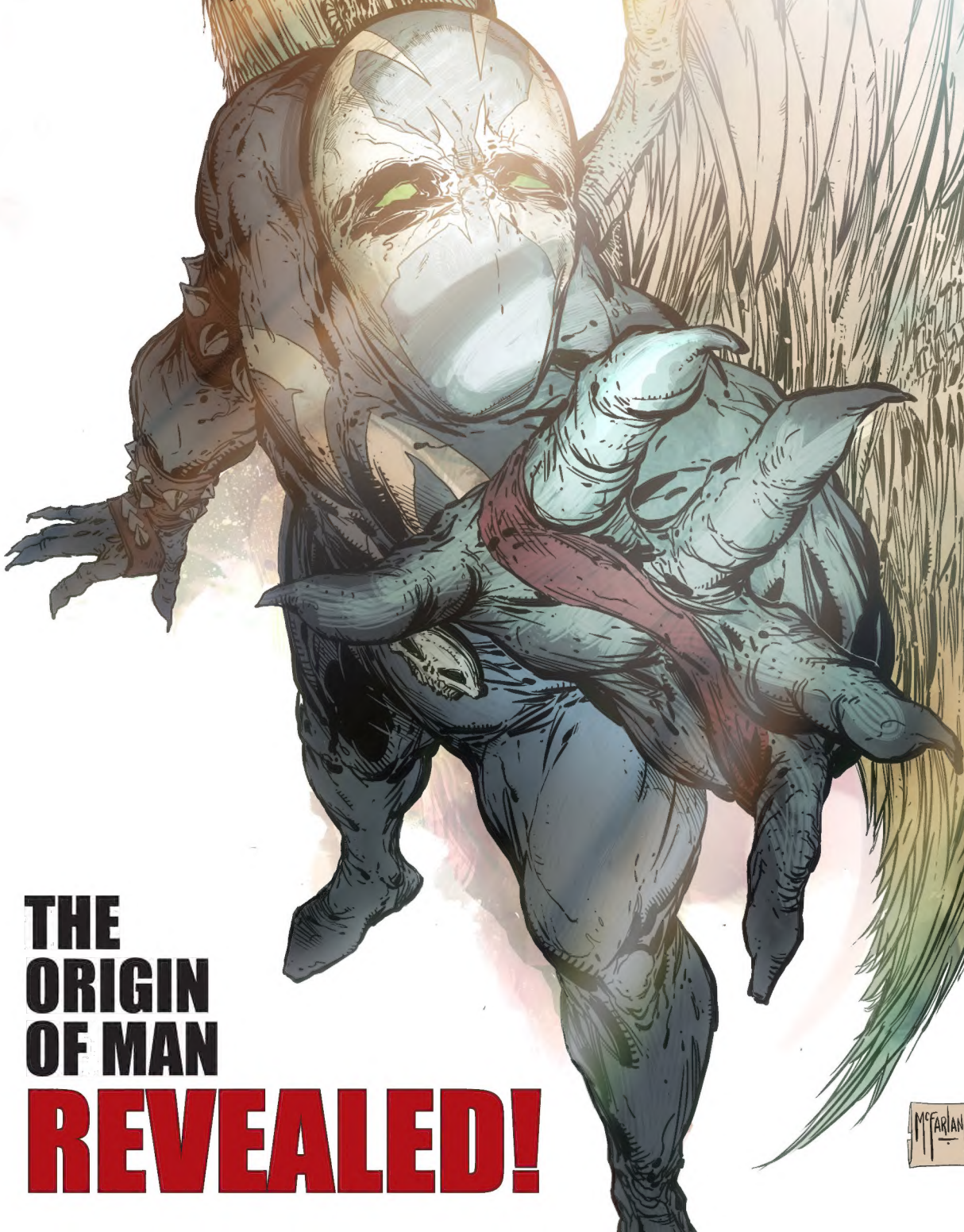


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238
DIGITAL
EDITION

SPAWN[®]



**THE
ORIGIN
OF MAN
REVEALED!**

McFARIANE



PREVIOUSLY IN SPAWN

After jumping off the Brooklyn Bridge to the depths below, Jim learns the costume won't let him go that easily. However, Cogliostro steps in to save him from his watery grave, and urges him to understand why he's in the special position he's in.

As the two walk into the construction site for Jim's new foundation, Cog explains the reason Bludd is working so fast to construct the building. The site houses a secret, one that's sparked wars for years on end, and must be hidden from enemies. What will Jim and Cog do now that they've uncovered the Dead Zone?



Jim Downing (Spawn) – A man whose past is shrouded in mystery, and connected intimately to the very fabric of the Spawn mythos, Jim is the world's newest Hellspawn...and so much more. Having spent years in a deep coma, Jim's main drive is piecing together the fragments of the man he was, in an effort to discover the man he truly is.



Bludd – An old and powerful vampire leader, the true depths of Bludd's history are as yet unknown. In his human guise as the international mogul, Mr. Ramus, Bludd has amassed great wealth and influence. His desire to control the Jim Downing, and with him the powers of the costume, is no secret, and has led to an uneasy partnership between Bludd and Jim – a partnership that is mutually beneficial, and, quite possibly, mutually destructive.



Cogliostro – Once locked in a tower in Hell, the ultimate Hellspawn mentor has mysteriously returned to guide the newest Hellspawn, Jim Downing. However, his motivations are not yet clear, leaving Jim to wonder if Cog can be trusted.



Dead Zone – A celestial safe zone, which neutralizes both agents of Heaven and Hell's powers. Several Dead Zones exist, though few have been revealed. These portals allow Heaven and Hell to place each other's pieces (agents) on the board (Earth), but they're full origin story may alter the game in a way no one's imagined.

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LIKE I SAID--
THIS PATCH OF DIRT
AND A FEW OTHERS
HIDDEN AROUND THE
WORLD--IS THE
REASON EVERY WAR
HAS BEEN FOUGHT
BY MANKIND.

THIS IS WHERE
'SIN' FIRST LEAKED
ITSELF ONTO EARTH. AND
FROM HERE IT ATTACHED
ITSELF TO EVERY LIVING CREATURE
IN EXISTENCE. WE TRY DENYING
HAVING IT IN US... BUT IT'S
THERE! IN ALL OF US. WE'VE
JUST GOTTEN SO USED TO IT
THAT WE CALL IT DIFFERENT
NAMES NOW.

EGO. ANGER.
GREED. A DOZEN
OTHERS. AT THE END
OF THE DAY IT'S ALL
THE SAME. AND
MAN HAS BECOME
ADDICTED TO
ITS ALLURE.



TO ITS
CALLING.

"THAT'S WHY THEY'VE DISTORTED HISTORY, BECAUSE MAN ALWAYS WANTED TO SEE HIMSELF AS BEING MORE PURE THAN HE REALLY WAS. SO NOW ONLY A FRACTION OF WRITTEN HISTORY IS TRUTHFUL. LIES AND DECEPTION HAVE FILLED IN THE REST.

"SO IF YOU HONESTLY WANT TO LEARN WHY YOU'RE A SPAWN, YOU MAY WANT TO PAY ATTENTION TO SOME OF THIS.

"NOW LET'S START AT THE BEGINNING. WAS THERE A GARDEN OF EDEN? SURE, BUT IT EXISTED A LOT LONGER THAN YOU'VE BEEN TAUGHT. AND WAS THERE AN ADAM AND EVE? YES, BUT THEY TOO CAME INTO EXISTENCE A LOT LONGER THAN THE BIBLE SAYS.

"THE BIG PIECE OF THAT STORY THAT WASN'T TOLD, IS EVE WASN'T THE ONLY WOMAN CREATED THEN. SHE HAD SISTERS. REMEMBER... WOMAN WAS CREATED FROM ADAM'S RIB. THOUGH THAT'S ANOTHER FABRICATION OF SORTS, ADAM HAD MORE THAN ONE RIB, SO EVE AND HER SISTERS WERE CREATED SIMULTANEOUSLY.

"AND HERE'S WHERE THINGS TAKE A TWIST AWAY FROM YOUR SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHINGS. WOMAN--LIKE MAN--WASN'T CREATED BY GOD ONLY. SHE ALSO HAD THE TOUCH OF SATAN IN HER D.N.A. YOU SEE, MR. DOWNING, THAT'S THE BIG LIE WE'VE ALL BEEN FED. THAT GOD ONLY MADE YOU. IT'S NEVER BEEN LIKE THAT. EVER! HEAVEN AND HELL HAVE ALWAYS HAD A FIFTY-FIFTY RELATIONSHIP. THEY'VE ALWAYS BEEN EQUALS.

"IT'S WHY ANY OF US HAS THE CAPACITY FOR BOTH GOOD AND EVIL. BECAUSE WE HAD TWO FATHERS THAT MADE US.

"EVE CHOSE TO FOLLOW CLOSER TO THE TEACHINGS OF GOD, WHILE HER SISTER LILITH CHOSE THE PATH OF SATAN.

"LILITH ACQUIRED POWER. LOTS OF IT. USING IT TO LURE VICTIMS INTO HER TRAP.

"SHE RELISHED EVERY MOMENT OF IT.

"AS SHE TRAVELLED THE COUNTRY-SIDE SHE BECAME MORE AND MORE SKILLED IN THE ART OF DECEPTION.

"AND WHENEVER SHE LAPSED, SHE'D HAVE A SPIRITUAL MEETING WITH HER LORD. HE WOULD TELL HER TO KEEP AN EYE ON HER OTHER SISTERS BECAUSE THEY WEREN'T LIKE HER."



"SO SHE WATCHED FROM A DISTANCE. MOSTLY SHE WATCHED EVE. SHE WAS THE MOST DIFFERENT FROM LILITH."



"THOUGH THEY SHARED TWO THINGS IN COMMON. ONE WAS ADAM-- HE'D BEDDED EACH OF THEM. THE SECOND WAS..."

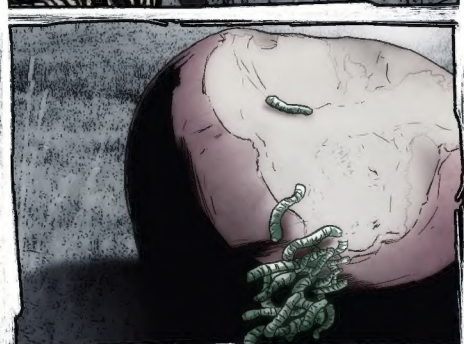


"NEITHER COULD RESIST TEMPTATION."




"AND WITH A SINGLE BITE EVERYTHING BECAME CONNECTED! EVERYTHING!"

"WHY DO YOU THINK YOUR CAPE IS RED? NOT BECAUSE BLOOD'S THAT COLOR. IT'S THE APPLE! IT SIGNIFIED HUMANS HUNGER FOR EVIL! AND SADLY, THAT APPETITE WILL NEVER BE SATISFIED. WHICH IS HOW EDEN FELL INTO DESPAIR, AND LIKE THE SKULLS ON YOUR OWN COSTUME, DEATH BEGAN TO APPEAR ALL AROUND."



"PARADISE WAS LOST AND A NEW HUMANITY TOOK IT'S PLACE. GOD AND SATAN FOUGHT OVER THE CONTROL OF THESE BEINGS CONSTANTLY."



"AT FIRST 'MOTHER NATURE' THOUGHT HER TWO SONS WOULD GROW TIRED OF THE CONSTANT BICKERING OVER WHO CONTROLLED THIS NEW FOUND BALL CALLED 'EARTH'. BUT THEY DIDN'T. SO SHE DID THE ONLY THING ANY MOTHER WOULD DO...SHE TOOK AWAY THE BALL.

"SHE POISONED THE AIR AND THE WATER AND SOON ALL LIFE DISAPPEARED. WITH NO SOULS TO FIGHT OVER, GOD AND SATAN HAD TO LEARN TO GET ALONG. FOR A TIME IT ACTUALLY WORKED.


"BUT IT STARTED AGAIN!"

"ALL BECAUSE A SINGLE AMOEBA SPLIT, THEN BECAME TWO, THEN FOUR, EIGHT, SIXTEEN, LIFE HAD BEGUN ONCE MORE. THE ANIMALS EVOLVED FIRST LONG BEFORE MANKIND. THAT'S WHEN GOD AND SATAN BEGAN FIGHTING AGAIN. THEY COULDN'T WAIT FOR MAN'S SOUL TO REAPPEAR SO THEY DIVIDED THE ANIMALS. HEAVEN GOT THE DOVE, BUTTERFLIES, PUPPIES, HORSES. EVERY ANIMAL WE THINK OF IN A POSITIVE LIGHT.

"SATAN TOOK THE RAT, THE WOLF, SNAKES, SPIDERS, VULTURES, BATS. ALL THE ANIMALS AND CREATURES WE NOW ASSOCIATE WITH DARKNESS.

"EVENTUALLY, MAN STOOD SUPREME AGAIN WITH GOD AND SATAN VYING FOR EACH AND EVERY SOUL. YET BECAUSE EACH HUMAN IS A COMBINATION OF THESE TWO FORCES THERE WAS A NEED TO CONQUER. AT FIRST IT WAS JUST THE ANIMALS. WHEN THAT WAS ACCOMPLISHED ALL THAT WAS LEFT WAS MAN HIMSELF. THAT'S WHEN THE WORD 'WAR' WAS CREATED.

"WHETHER DRIVEN BECAUSE OF LOVE, GREED OR POLITICS, THIS NEW BREED OF MAN BECAME SO SKILLED AT ANNIHILATING EACH OTHER, THEIR SOULS WERE EVEN MORE VALUABLE TO SATAN AND GOD THAN EVER BEFORE."



"THAT'S BECAUSE EACH OF THEM HAD BEGUN SCHEMING HOW TO CONTROL THEIR OWN DESTINY. FIRST IT WOULD REQUIRE AMASSING THE LARGEST ARMY OF SOULS POSSIBLE. AN ARMY SO DOMINANT IT COULD BE USED TO ELIMINATE THEIR SIBLING. THEN, THE WINNER WOULD CONTROL TWO ARMIES-- THEIR OWN AND THAT OF THEIR DEAD BROTHER'S. THAT CULMINATION OF POWER WOULD THEN BE USED FOR A GREATER PURPOSE...TO **KILL** THEIR **MOTHER!**"


"TO DO THAT, BOTH GOD AND SATAN KNEW ONE OF THEM NEEDED TO HAVE A MORE VICIOUS AND VILE ARMY THAN THE OTHER. BUT INSTEAD OF FIGHTING THEY CAME TO AN AGREEMENT. EVERY SOUL WOULD ALTERNATE WHERE IT WAS SENT UPON DEATH. ONE TO HEAVEN THEN THE NEXT TO HELL. THIS BACK AND FORTH HAS BEEN GOING ON SINCE THE DAWN OF THIS NEW HUMAN SPECIES."

"SO IT HAS **NOTHING** TO DO WITH WHETHER YOU ARE A GOOD PERSON OR NOT. THE ONLY THING THAT MATTERS IS WHERE THE SOUL OF THE PERSON WHO DIED **JUST BEFORE YOU** GOES? WHATEVER THAT ANSWER IS...YOUR SOUL GOES THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION."

"THE SINGLE BIGGEST CON PERPETRATED ON MAN HAS BEEN HIS DELUSION IN THINKING ANY OF HIS EARTHLY ACTIONS HAVE ANY BEARING ON HIS FINAL DESTINY. **BEING GOOD OR EVIL IS IRRELEVANT!** EVERY SOUL IS NOTHING MORE THAN A POTENTIAL SOLDIER FOR EITHER ARMY."

"AND SINCE BOTH ONLY WANTED THEIR NEXT SOUL TO BE AS RUTHLESS AS POSSIBLE, THEY HELPED TRAIN MAN IN THE WAYS OF WAR. BECAUSE THE MORE SADISTIC A HUMAN WAS DURING LIFE, THE MORE EVIL HIS SOUL WOULD BE IN DEATH."

"GOD AND SATAN DESIRED THESE TYPES OF SOULS MORE THAN ANY OTHER. BECAUSE THEY KNEW WHOEVER HAD THE BEST OF THIS KIND WOULD EVENTUALLY WIN THEIR **UNHOLY WAR.**"



"AND AS TIME MARCHED ON SO DID THE ADVANCEMENTS IN WARFARE. WHAT STARTED WITH STICKS AND ROCKS, BECAME SPEARS WHICH SOON WERE REPLACED BY STEEL... OR MORE ACCURATELY SWORDS, CANNONBALLS AND BULLETS.

"PUT THAT TOGETHER WITH NEW WAYS OF TRAVEL AND MAN WAS NOW ABLE TO TAKE HIS BLOODLUST TO PARTS OF THE WORLD HE DIDN'T EVEN KNOW EXISTED. WHERE HE MET STRANGE GROUPS OF HUMANS-- WITH SKIN COLORS NEVER IMAGINED.

"BORDERS BECAME MEANINGLESS. OCEANS WERE CROSSED AND ENTIRE CIVILIZATIONS WERE WIPED OUT BY HEARTLESS ARMIES. YET THIS WAS STILL JUST THE INFANCY OF HOW BRUTAL MAN COULD BE. MOUNTS, WHETHER THEY BE HORSES OR CAMELS COULD ONLY TRAVEL SO FAR.

"EVEN SHIPS CARRYING A HUNDRED OR MORE MEN AT A TIME WERE SUBJECT TO WEATHER CONDITIONS. PATIENCE WAS STILL SOMETHING BOTH GOD AND SATAN HAD A HARD TIME ACCEPTING. I THINK THEY FEARED 'MOTHER NATURE' WOULD COME AGAIN AND POISON THE AIR AND WATER. SO THEY SENT MESSENGERS OF THEIR OWN TO HELP MANKIND SPEED UP HIS DEVELOPMENT.


"THESE MESSENGERS BECAME KNOWN AS ANGELS OR DEMONS-- DEPENDING ON WHO SENT THEM. BUT EITHER WAY THEIR GOALS WERE EXACTLY THE SAME. HELP MAN LEARN HOW TO KILL BETTER AND FASTER."

"THEN IT ALL HIT A TIPPING POINT! HISTORY CALLS IT THE 'INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION'. HISTORIANS STILL GUSH OVER THE ADVANCEMENTS OF CHAIN SUPPLIES, MANUFACTURING AND THE BEGINNING OF ASSEMBLY LINES. BUT IT WAS REALLY A NEW TOOL WE COULD USE FOR KILLING ONE ANOTHER AT EFFICIENCY RATES ONLY DREAMED OF BEFORE.

"BECAUSE THIS TIME THE WORLD WAS WILLING TO SIMULTANEOUSLY JOIN IN WAR. MEANING MORE PEOPLE DIED IN A SHORTER PERIOD OF TIME. IT WAS ECSTASY TO BOTH HEAVEN AND HELL. SOULS WERE BEING DELIVERED AT THEIR FASTEST RATE YET.

"WHICH IN TURN ONLY FED THE ADRENALINE RUSH BEING FELT BY GOD AND SATAN. THEY COULD, FOR THE FIRST TIME, ACTUALLY FEEL THEY WERE GETTING CLOSER TO THEIR INTENDED GOAL."





"BUT THEY NEEDED A FEW KEY MEN THEY COULD CORRUPT--THOSE WHO HELD INFLUENCE OVER THE THOUGHTS AND LIVES OF SO MANY OTHERS. GOD SELECTED ONE. SATAN TOOK THE OTHER. SOON A SECOND WAR WITH THE WORLD WAS UNDERWAY.

"ONE OF THE RECRUITS WAS ONLY MORE THAN HAPPY TO JUMP INTO THE FRAY BECAUSE HE HAD BEEN PROMISED MORE POWER AND STATURE THAN HE'D EVER HAD AS A COMMON ARTIST. THAT HE WAS IN JAIL WHEN THE OFFER WAS PRESENTED TO HIM ONLY MADE IT THAT MUCH EASIER.

"THE OTHER MAJOR PRINCIPAL HELD OUT MUCH, MUCH LONGER, UNTIL FINALLY COMMITTING HIS PEOPLE TO YEARS OF SLAUGHTER. IRONICALLY, IT WAS A HANDFUL OF SCIENTISTS, NOT WARRIORS, THAT BECAME PIVOTAL. INSTEAD OF GAS OR GRENADES, THE CREATION OF THE HYDROGEN BOMB ALLOWED A FEW MILITARY MEN TO ERADICATE A DENSELY POPULATED AREA.

"THE OTHER GERMAN RECRUIT TOOK A MORE CRUDE FASHION TO KILLING HIS ENEMIES. HE SIMPLY BURNED THEM. BY THE TIME IT WAS DONE THE WAR'S DEAD NUMBERED IN THE MILLIONS. YET INSTEAD OF HAVING THE CARNAGE BECOME A DETERRENT TO FUTURE CLASHES, IT JUST STOKED THE FIRES. NEARLY EVERY MAJOR NATION WANTED TO GET THEIR HANDS ON THE SAME NUCLEAR DEVICE THAT HAD KILLED SO MANY, SO FAST."



"ALONG THE WAY THERE WERE A FEW HICCUPS TO THEIR PLANS. YOUR FIRST CATHOLIC PRESIDENT WAS ONE OF THEM. ORIGINALLY HE'D AGREED TO GO ALONG LIKE ALL THE OTHERS BY CONTINUING TO RAMP UP THE GLOBAL DESTRUCTION THAT HAD NOW PLANTED ITS SEED IN EVERY NATION.

"THE PINNACLE EVENT IS WHAT WAS CALLED THE 'COLD WAR.' THAT CONFLICT WAS TO HAVE KICK-STARTED A NUCLEAR CHAIN REACTION WHICH MAY HAVE ULTIMATELY WIPED OUT MANKIND. KENNEDY, PERHAPS SENSING THE MAGNITUDE OF WHAT MIGHT COME, CHANGED COURSE AND PREVENTED WAR.

"A SHORT WHILE LATER HE WAS GIVEN ANOTHER CHANCE TO REDEEM HIMSELF. HE FAILED THAT TEST TOO. SO WHEN HE BECAME AWARE OF A SMALL INSTALLATION--CODENAME 'THE PROJECT'--THAT HAD BEGUN ITS OWN EXPERIMENTS TO GENETICALLY GROW SOLDIERS CAPABLE OF IGNITING POTENTIAL WARS THEMSELVES, GOD AND SATAN KNEW HE'D BALK AGAIN.

"SO THEY ELIMINATED HIM. ALONG WITH A FEW OTHER LEADERS AROUND THE WORLD AND REPLACED THEM WITH MORE WILLING SERVANTS. THOSE MOVES ESCALATED THE ALREADY ACTIVE BATTLES IN VIETNAM."

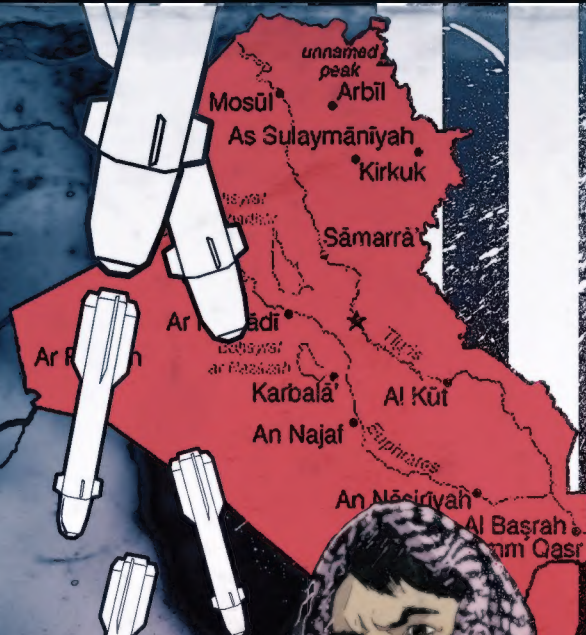
"BY THEN THE WORLD HAD BECOME ONE CONTINUOUS WAR ZONE, WHERE THERE WAS NEVER A SINGLE MOMENT IN WHICH MAN WAS NOT IN CONFLICT WITH HIMSELF. DESERT STORM, AFGHANISTAN, IRAN, IRAQ. WARS AREN'T BEING FOUGHT FOR THE REASONS REPORTED IN THE NEWS. THEY'RE BEING FOUGHT BECAUSE HEAVEN AND HELL WANT THEM TO BE."

"AND TO MAKE SURE ALL OF IT GOES THEIR WAY-- EACH HAS SENT, FROM TIME TO TIME, THEIR BEST WARRIORS TO EARTH HOPING THEY'LL INCITE MORE BATTLES DIRECTLY OR MERELY BY THEIR VERY EXISTENCE."

"THAT'S WHERE YOU AND I COME IN. BEING SPAWNS, WE'RE PART OF THIS BULLSHIT! THAT'S WHAT THIS PIECE OF DIRT IS HERE FOR. IT'S THE SPOT WHERE WE GET PLACED AFTER BEING CHOSEN TO BE A SPAWN."

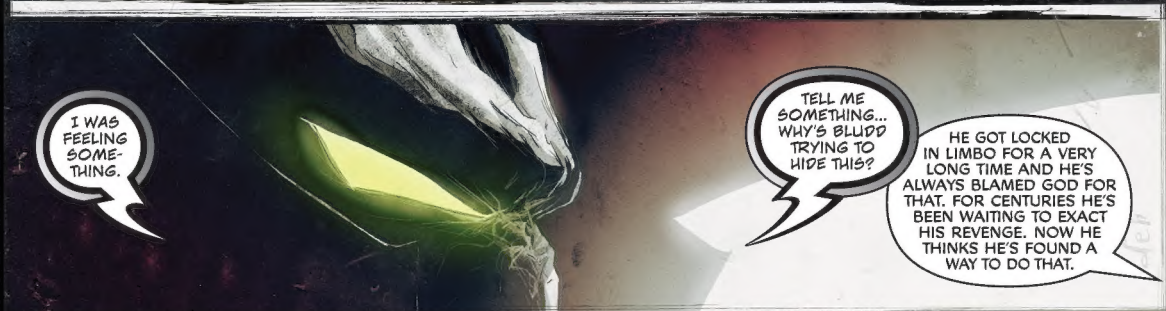
"THESE 'DEAD ZONES' ARE WHERE HEAVEN PLACES SATAN'S WARRIORS. THAT'S PART OF THE DEAL THE BROTHERS MADE. WHOEVER WANTS TO SEND THEIR WARRIOR AGENT BACK TO EARTH MUST LET THE OTHER CHOOSE WHERE THAT AGENT WILL APPEAR IN THE WORLD. SINCE SPAWNS COME FROM HELL... GOD GETS TO PLACE US WHERE HE WANTS."

"AND EVEN IF WE WANTED, WE COULD NEVER RETALIATE AGAINST GOD. SEE, THERE'S A REASON THEY CALL THESE 'DEAD ZONES.' IT'S BECAUSE NONE OF OUR POWERS WORK WHEN WE'RE STANDING INSIDE ONE. TRY USING YOUR CHAINS OR YOUR ECTOPLASM. THEY WON'T WORK! NONE OF YOUR COSTUME WILL."





YOU'RE
AS CLOSE TO BEING
MORTAL AS YOU'LL
EVER BE STANDING
HERE.



I WAS
FEELING
SOME-
THING.

TELL ME
SOMETHING...
WHY'S BLUDD
TRYING TO
HIDE THIS?

HE GOT LOCKED
IN LIMBO FOR A VERY
LONG TIME AND HE'S
ALWAYS BLAMED GOD FOR
THAT. FOR CENTURIES HE'S
BEEN WAITING TO EXACT
HIS REVENGE. NOW HE
THINKS HE'S FOUND A
WAY TO DO THAT.



Elsewhere.



WE'RE ALL
HERE, BLUDD.
WHAT DO YOU
WANT US TO DO
NOW?

TO BE CONTINUED





Tyrant
Lizard
King

EMPIRE